UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM

ACC

Administrative Committee on Coordination

ACC/1992/31
18 February 1993

ENGLISH ONLY

REPORT OF THE TENTH INTER-AGENCY MEETING ON THE UNITED NATIONS DECADE OF DISABLED PERSONS

(Vienna, 7-10 December 1992)

SUMMARY

The Tenth Inter-Agency Meeting on the United Nations Decade of Disabled Persons identified four issues to be brought to the attention of the Administrative Committee on Coordination (para. 4). The participants reviewed the major achievements and obstacles encountered during the Decade, and discussed the outcome of the special plenary meetings of the forty-seventh session of the General Assembly to mark the conclusion of the Decade (paras. 22-30).

The Meeting welcomed the request by the General Assembly for the continuation of the inter-agency mechanism on disability and agreed on a two-pronged approach to future meetings: a full-fledged inter-agency meeting would be convened every two years, while regional meetings would be convened by regional economic commissions every other year (paras. 31-33). Draft terms of reference for the work of future inter-agency meetings on disability were recommended (annex I). The Meeting acknowledged the need for increased collaboration in the future, which should extend not only to bodies and agencies of the United Nations system but also to non-governmental organizations (paras. 34-39).

The progress made by the United Nations Office at Vienna/Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs (UNOV/CSDHA) on the advanced data collection and retrieval system for disability-related information (CLEAR) was welcomed, and participants accepted the invitation to collaborate in the collection and dissemination of information. They stressed the importance of a unified, well-coordinated monitoring mechanism for a long-term strategy to further the implementation of the World Programme of Action concerning Disabled Persons to the year 2000 and beyond, and concluded that there was a need to build a clear link between the strategy and the forthcoming document on the standard rules on the equalization of opportunities for disabled persons.

The advantage of a multisectoral approach by agencies in the field of technical cooperation on disability was stressed, and participants focused on ways to use existing resources and raise new funds for technical cooperation programmes (paras. 40-54). All participating United Nations entities and

non-governmental organizations reported on progress made in their activities since the Ninth Inter-Agency Meeting on the Decade (paras. 5-21).

The participants agreed that the next inter-agency meeting on disability issues at the global level should be tentatively scheduled to take place at Vienna in January 1994; they also agreed on the items that should be included on the provisional agenda of that meeting (para. 57).

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INTRODUCTION

1. The Tenth Inter-Agency Meeting on the United Nations Decade of Disabled Persons was held at Vienna from 7 to 10 December 1992. The list of participants is contained in annex II. The agenda corresponds to the section headings of chapter II of the present report.

2. The meeting, chaired by the Director of the Social Development Division, was opened by the Director and Deputy to the Under-Secretary-General for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs. He emphasized the essential role played by the inter-agency mechanism on disability during the United Nations Decade of Disabled Persons in the coordination of policy and action of the United Nations system. He also expressed appreciation for the concerted inter-agency cooperation during the Decade in support of the implementation of the World Programme of Action concerning Disabled Persons (see A/37/351/Add.1 and Corr.1).

3. The Deputy stated that the inter-agency meeting would be an important tool for consolidating and building upon the achievements of the Decade. The conclusion of the Decade had given rise to a clear concern on the part of the international community to maintain and sustain the momentum generated by the Decade beyond 1992. He expressed gratitude for the support given to the United Nations system by non-governmental organizations throughout the Decade, which support was vital to concerted international efforts to implement the World Programme of Action.

I. MATTERS BROUGHT TO THE ATTENTION OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE COMMITTEE ON COORDINATION

4. The Tenth Inter-Agency Meeting on the Decade adopted the following recommendations:

Recommendation 1

In response to the General Assembly request to continue the inter-agency meetings on disability, the Meeting recommended new terms of reference for future inter-agency meetings. The proposed terms of reference, including guidelines, purpose, format, composition, duration and venue, are contained in annex I.

Recommendation 2

The Meeting recommended that the shift from awareness-raising to action in the field of disability should be strongly reflected in joint efforts by the agencies, particularly at the country level, and that emphasis should be placed on action in developing countries.

Recommendation 3

The Meeting recommended that work on an affirmative action plan for the employment of disabled persons within the United Nations system should be vigorously pursued and approved by 1995, the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations.

Recommendation 4

In view of the important developments in the field of disability in 1993, the participants agreed that the next inter-agency meeting on disability issues at the global level should be tentatively scheduled to take place in Vienna in January 1994 and that the following items should be included on the provisional agenda:

(a) Report on progress made and follow-up to the Tenth Inter-Agency Meeting on the Decade;

(b) Status of elaboration of the standard rules on the equalization of opportunities for disabled persons and the long-term strategy to the year 2000 and beyond and its practical implications for inter-agency cooperation;

(c) Review and identification of human development indicators relating to the quality of life of persons with disabilities;

(d) Employment of persons with disabilities within the United Nations system;

(e) Regional inter-agency meetings in 1995.

II. DISCUSSION

A. Report on progress made and follow-up to the Ninth Inter-Agency Meeting on the Decade

5. The participants reported on disability-related action taken by the Secretariat, specialized agencies of the United Nations system and non-governmental organizations to carry out the tasks agreed upon by the Ninth Inter-Agency Meeting on the United Nations Decade of Disabled Persons, held at Vienna from 3-6 December 1991.

6. A large portion of the activities of the United Nations Office at Vienna/the Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs (UNOV/CSDHA) had focused on the second round of monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of the World Programme of Action concerning Disabled Persons, as well as on the preparation of a draft long-term strategy to further its implementation to the year 2000 and beyond. In collaboration with the Government of Canada, an Expert Group Meeting on a Long-term Strategy had been

held in Vancouver from 25-29 April 1992. The draft strategy would be discussed in 1993 by the Commission for Social Development and by the General Assembly at its forty-eighth session. Special attention had been given to the preparations for the plenary meetings devoted to disability of the forty-seventh session of the General Assembly, as well as to other activities to mark the end of the Decade.

7. UNOV/CSDHA had served as the secretariat for the ad hoc open-ended working group to elaborate standard rules on the equalization of opportunities for disabled persons at its second and third sessions, held at Vienna from 11 to 15 May and 28 September to 2 October 1992. The text of the draft standard rules would be discussed in 1993 by the Commission for Social Development and the Economic and Social Council, prior to submission to the General Assembly at its forty-eighth session.

8. UNOV/CSDHA had continued preparation of a training manual for leaders and members of organizations of disabled persons in developing countries, a manual on integrating disability issues into development cooperation, and a manual on national disability legislation for developing countries. Work had continued on the Clearinghouse Database on Disability-Related Information (CLEAR) project. UNOV/CSDHA had designed and implemented an advanced data collection and retrieval system for disability-related information.

9. The representative of the Division for the Advancement of Women of UNOV/CSDHA drew the attention of participants to a draft declaration on violence against women adopted by an intersessional working group of the Commission on the Status of Women. Open to all Member States and observers of the United Nations, the draft declaration took into account, among other things, violence against disabled women.

10. The Department of Public Information had continued to promote the work of the United Nations concerning disabled persons using a multimedia approach. It had coordinated both the production of an exhibit in connection with Independence '92 and the expert group meeting on long-term strategy held in Vancouver in April 1992. Full television, photo, radio and press release coverage had been provided by the Department of Public Information for the special plenary meetings on disability at the forty-seventh session of the General Assembly. Other activities had included a progress report on the Decade; dissemination of information on disability to United Nations information centres; distribution of press kits and press releases; reprinting of the World Programme of Action concerning Disabled Persons; distribution of In Brief - The World Programme of Action Concerning Disabled Persons, 1/ an illustrated abbreviated version of the World Programme of Action, as well as of a system-wide publication, The United Nations Decade of Disabled Persons - A Decade of Accomplishment, 2/ a full-colour illustrated book; production of an exhibit illustrating key concepts of the World Programme of Action; and holding of press conferences and a non-governmental organization briefing during the special plenary meetings.

11. The Economic Commission for Europe (ECE), as part of its activities to mark the end of the Decade, had organized the Third Workshop on Rehabilitation Engineering in Trebon, former Czech and Slovak Federal Republic, from 24 to 27 May 1992. The Workshop had been attended by more than 70 experts from 18 countries, as well as by representatives from 13 international, regional and subregional organizations. The discussions had centred on the current problems faced by the world-wide rehabilitation community, including the urgent need to equalize opportunities for disabled persons.

12. The Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) had organized a Cultural Event for Disabled Persons to mark the end of the United Nations Decade of Disabled Persons in the ESCWA region in Amman on 17 and 18 October 1992. The plenary session of the Event had endorsed a draft long-term regional strategy towards the year 2010, the proclamation of an ESCWA Decade of Disabled Persons (1993-2002) and the continuation of the implementation of the World Programme of Action beyond the end of the Decade. ESCWA had completed studies on the introduction, adaptation and transfer of appropriate technologies for disabled persons in the region and on the implementation in the region of the World Programme of Action. It had prepared a video on the 1989 Amman Conference on Capabilities and Needs of Disabled Persons in the ESCWA region and it was working on appropriate information dissemination to different categories of disabled persons. ESCWA was planning to organize an expert group meeting on the role of women within the family in the rehabilitation of disabled persons and disabled women in the region.

13. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) had undertaken to train its staff, particularly in the field, in the prevention of disability, as well as in the care and rehabilitation of disabled refugees at the community level. It had developed and disseminated guidelines on these subjects for use in the field. A Workshop on Assistance to Disabled Refugees had been organized, which had focused on working with disabled refugees in refugee emergencies; counselling disabled persons in their environment; community-based rehabilitation; training of community health workers; vocational rehabilitation; long-term durable solutions such as repatriation; and local integration and resettlement. Other topics covered included the effects of war, victims of torture and mentally ill/mentally disabled refugees. UNHCR had made plans to conduct four similar workshops in 1993 for anglophone Africa, francophone Africa, Middle and Eastern Europe, and Central and South America.

14. The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) had continued, through its ongoing assisted programmes, to undertake action-oriented measures for improving the situation of the estimated 150 million children with disabilities as well as ensuring their protection and development. During 1992, UNICEF-assisted disability programmes for children and women were reported from over 50 countries of Asia, Africa, the Middle East, Latin America and Central and Eastern Europe. UNICEF had called for a global offensive on the childhood disability front as powerful as the one being waged against childhood mortality. The Rehabilitation International/UNICEF

Technical Support Programme had continued to promote childhood disability prevention and rehabilitation.

15. The main activities of the United Nations Development Programme/International Initiative against Avoidable Disablement (UNDP/IMPACT) had been directed against the most prevalent causes of disability, with a focus on primary and secondary prevention, using available cost-effective technologies. UNDP/IMPACT had continued its activities in India, Kenya, Mali, Nepal, the Philippines and Thailand, and plans were under way to encourage the elaboration of disability prevention programmes in at least 20 additional countries in the next five years. A strategy and a plan of action had been prepared which would promote an integrated approach to disability prevention based on primary health care. UNDP/IMPACT was also making significant progress in promoting disability prevention in industrialized countries. It had begun production of new information materials on disability prevention with the collaboration of Rehabilitation International and technical inputs from the World Health Organization (WHO) and the International Labour Organisation (ILO).

16. The United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) had organized a Conference on Community Rehabilitation Programmes for Disabled Palestine Refugees in Jordan in May 1992, in coordination with Oxfam. The Conference had been attended by representatives of international non-governmental organizations and local communities from Lebanon, Syria, Jordan and the Occupied Territory of West Bank and Gaza. UNRWA had adopted a declaration of policy and a strategy to guide internal decisions in relation to disability which stated, inter alia, that disabled Palestine refugees had the same right to UNRWA services and assistance as other Palestine refugees. In addition, the Agency had resolved to attempt to recruit at least 2 per cent of new staff members from the physically disabled population. Emphasis had been placed on community-based rehabilitation programmes, and training and orientation programmes had been organized at the local level.

17. ILO had initiated a shift away from the provision of vocational rehabilitation services towards a greater concern for human rights and the promotion of equal training and employment opportunities, and also for improving the accessibility of general training and employment programmes (mainstreaming) to disabled persons. The main tool for this purpose had been ILO Convention No. 159 on Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment of Disabled Persons, adopted by the ILO International Conference in 1983, which had constituted the main ILO achievement of the Decade. The Convention had been ratified by 43 countries. A regional seminar for Portuguese-speaking countries in Africa and a regional conference for the nine Latin American countries which had ratified Convention 159 had been held as part of ILO activities to mark the end of the Decade. Publications had included New Technologies and the Employment of Disabled Persons, 3/ produced in collaboration with Rehabilitation International, and guidelines for employers and workers on the employment of disabled persons.

18. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) had continued to assist Governments in the identification of vulnerable groups in order to prevent and control malnutrition and the disabilities that could result therefrom. Through its Vitamin A Programme, FAO had contributed to the prevention and control of nutritional blindness, and plans were under way to expand its work in the prevention of deficiency diseases. FAO was collaborating with UNDP and the World Bank in developing a field manual and technical supplements on social and gender analysis for project identification and formulation, with a focus on rural women and with specific reference to the role of disabled women. The representative of FAO drew the attention of the meeting to the simultaneous convening in Rome that week of the International Conference on Nutrition, which was considering, inter alia, the World Declaration on Nutrition and the Plan of Action for Nutrition, which recognized that poverty and lack of education were the root causes of hunger and malnutrition. The meeting would also address the broad range of factors affecting the nutritional well-being of people in developing and developed countries, with special attention being given to the poor and vulnerable.

19. The main thrust of the activities of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) had centred on two main areas: support for policy and planning for education of children and young people with special needs, and support for ordinary teacher-training programmes to help pupils with special needs in the ordinary classroom. In its efforts to mobilize education policy and decision makers for wider access of children with special educational needs to the regular school system, UNESCO had organized three regional seminars in Botswana, Venezuela and Austria, bringing together teams of officials from ministries of education and other high-level education officials. An Asian Regional Seminar was being planned to take place in China in February 1993 and a Seminar for Arab States was being organized in Jordan in April 1993. The seminars would provide a forum for dialogue and exchange on new strategies for reaching out to children with special needs within the framework of mainstream education. UNESCO had organized a major international project to develop teacher education materials for meeting special needs in ordinary schools, which had resulted in a teacher education resource pack that could serve as a basis for courses at both the pre-service and in-service levels. Other activities had included the development of video-training packages for parent education, and the development of a Database for the processing and dissemination of information related to education for children with special needs (SPEED).

20. WHO had continued to collaborate with Governments and non-governmental organizations in planning and evaluating national rehabilitation programmes. It had held intercountry workshops in Zimbabwe and Senegal to review the status of rehabilitation programmes and had also organized regional and global activities for rehabilitation. WHO had continued to consolidate its collaboration with non-governmental organizations in order to promote the development and strengthening of community-based rehabilitation. It had prepared guidelines for the prevention of deformities in polio and was preparing a guide for the care of children with cerebral palsy.

21. The International Council on Disability and Disabled Peoples' International reported on their activities, which included the General Assembly of the World Blind Union in Cairo, 2-6 November 1992; the Third World Congress of Disabled Peoples' International in Vancouver, April 1992; regional training programmes; campaigns against the abuse of the human rights of persons with mental handicaps; research projects; programmes to empower disabled persons; and awareness-raising campaigns.

B. A review of the achievements of the United Nations Decade of Disabled Persons and a preview of the future

1. Outcome of the forty-seventh session of the General Assembly

22. Attention was drawn to the report of the Secretary-General (A/47/415 and Corr.1), which had outlined the major achievements and obstacles encountered during the Decade. The participants were informed about the four special plenary meetings of the forty-seventh session of the General Assembly held to mark the conclusion of the United Nations Decade of Disabled Persons and about the discussion on disability of the Third Committee. Reference was also made to the International Meeting of Ministers Responsible for the Status of Disabled Persons in Montreal and a non-governmental forum in New York, both held prior to the special plenary meetings. The latter, it was noted, had provided an opportunity for Member States to highlight their activities and future plans in the disability field. The meetings had been a powerful demonstration of political commitment and the growing awareness of the needs and rights of persons with disabilities. Leading international non-governmental organizations in the disability field had also made presentations.

23. The main issues that had emerged from the special plenary meetings were:

(a) Recognition of the central and unique role of the United Nations system in the disability field;

(b) The need for increased national-level action and technical assistance for countries in need;

(c) The emergence of accessibility to the labour market as a major issue in the post-Decade era;

(d) The need for coordinated action at the regional and international levels as an essential prerequisite to advancement;

(e) The importance of ensuring the inclusion of disability issues on the agendas of major international meetings.

24. A resolution had been adopted calling for the declaration of 3 December as International Day of Disabled Persons. Attention was also drawn to the resolution elaborated in the Third Committee which, inter alia, stressed the

importance of continuing inter-agency meetings and called for the establishment of a proposed panel of eminent persons to advise the Secretary-General on disability issues.

25. Whilst the meetings had been a clear reflection of political support for disability issues and a reaffirmation of the World Programme of Action concerning Disabled Persons, it was noted that there was a large discrepancy between political statements and reality at the national level. One of the major tasks at present was to maintain the political momentum generated by the special General Assembly meetings on disability, particularly in terms of mobilizing resources, which continued to be a serious hurdle to development.

26. The importance of action at the national level and in the field, particularly in developing countries, was strongly emphasized. Discrepancies were pointed out in the situations of different groups of disabled persons in some regions, due to poor distribution of already limited services. Emphasis was placed on the need to integrate disability issues in broad social and economic development planning.

27. The participants acknowledged the need for increased collaboration in the future, which should extend not only to bodies and agencies of the United Nations system but also to non-governmental organizations and disabled persons themselves. They noted that although there had been increased awareness of disability issues, much more was required in the area of awareness-raising, particularly at the national level.

28. Strong support for disabled persons organizations was expressed, both by agencies and non-governmental organizations. The view was widely shared that the future of the programme depended to a large extent on the empowerment of disabled people. Some participants noted the value for the fu ure of the community-based approach to disability and the concept of independent living/self-determined living.

29. Specific achievements of the implementation of the World Programme of Action (A/37/351/Add.1 and Corr.1) during the Decade which were discussed by the General Assembly included the strengthening of disabled persons organizations; the development of two additional United Nations policy documents on disability, soon to be issued (on standard rules (E/CN.5/1993/5) and long-term strategy (E/CN.5/1993/4)); and a considerable degree of raised awareness. The key to success in the future would rest on the implementation and monitoring of those three documents, the increased participation of disabled persons organizations and improved cooperation between all interested parties.

30. It was also suggested that a new action-oriented approach had to be forged, based on joint cooperation within the United Nations system. One way to achieve this might be through the elaboration and implementation of a United Nations system-wide medium-term plan on disability.

2. The inter-agency meetings after the Decade

31. The participants were informed that the General Assembly had requested, in a recent resolution (A/C.3/47/L.15, para. 8 (g)), the continuation of the inter-agency meetings on disability issues. As the Decade ended, there was a need to review and suggest ways and means to consolidate and build upon the achievements of the International Year of Disabled Persons and the Decade, and to consider the effective role of the inter-agency mechanism in the exercise. It was recalled that one of the most important achievements of the inter-agency meetings during the Decade had been the improved knowledge gained of the work and specific contribution of each participating organization. There had been better coordination and consensus on policy issues. On the other hand a major problem faced by the entities of the United Nations system had been their inability to persuade Governments to give higher priority to disability issues, in order to provide the resources that would permit forceful initiatives and to translate policy into action.

32. The participants welcomed the request by the General Assembly for the continuation of the inter-agency mechanism on disability. Some of them suggested a tri-level (national, regional and international) inter-agency meeting. In view of budgetary constraints, the participants felt that by partly decentralizing the meetings, the regional commissions, United Nations field offices and non-governmental organizations would also be able to participate. This would enhance multilevel cooperation among the organizations.

33. The participants agreed on a two-pronged approach to future meetings. A full-fledged inter-agency meeting would be convened every two years, while regional meetings would be convened by all regional economic commissions, with the participation of United Nations system organizations and agencies at the regional level, to focus on specific issues relating to that particular region, every other year. The proposed formula and its terms of reference, including format, composition and frequency of the meetings, as proposed by the participants, are contained in annex I.

3. Cooperation with non-governmental organizations

34. It was strongly recognized that international non-governmental organizations had made important contributions at all levels to the United Nations disability programme. Their role in strengthening the international response to the United Nations Decade of Disabled Persons and the World Programme of Action concerning Disabled Persons had been especially appreciated, and their umbrella representations - the International Council on Disability and Disabled Peoples' International - had been included as observers in ad hoc inter-agency meetings throughout the Decade. It was agreed to further develop cooperation based on a coherent approach, ensuring the best use of expertise and information available from international non-governmental organizations. A format for collaboration with them was needed, it was stressed, in order to shape future cooperation and provide a closer dialogue.

35. Participants were informed that the Fifth Non-Governmental Organization Consultative Meeting, held in Vienna on 3 and 4 December 1992, had agreed that close cooperation between international non-governmental organizations and UNOV/CSDHA and United Nations agencies had been fruitful in the past Decade and should therefore be continued. There was a clear reaffirmation that each cross- and/or single-disability organization duly affiliated with the United Nations should have the right to address itself directly to the United Nations and its specialized agencies.

36. It was recalled that the international non-governmental organizations had also expressed their awareness that resources available to the United Nations Secretariat were limited and that a way should be found to increase them. The Consultative Meeting had suggested that more information should be provided to the international non-governmental organizations on the actual needs of the United Nations programme on disability, so that they could seek stronger support from Governments.

37. The discussion during the Fifth Non-Governmental Organization Consultative Meeting had recognized that activities at the national level needed to be strengthened by member organizations of the international non-governmental organizations in the years to come. This would result in closer cooperation with Governments, and in turn improve national programmes to empower disabled persons.

38. The participants acknowledged that the Non-Governmental Organization Consultative Meetings had demonstrated their usefulness and had proven to be a proper modality for cooperation. They agreed that future international non-governmental organizations consultative forums might last for two days, to allow the exchange of information amongst the organizations and the discussion of concrete projects. The second day, however, would be open to interested agencies of the United Nations system to discuss specific projects and programmatic issues of concern.

39. It was recognized that direct representation of major international non-governmental organizations on the first day of the inter-agency meetings, both those convened by the UNOV/CSDHA focal point on disability issues and those convened by the regional commissions, was essential in order to pursue effective cooperation.

4. Information Network on Disability

40. The participants were informed that UNOV/CSDHA had designed an advanced data collection and retrieval system for disability-related information (CLEAR), in response to one of the recommendations of the eighth inter-agency meeting. The main objective of CLEAR, the first phase of which had been financed by the Government of Sweden, was to provide an accurate, rapid and up-to-date response to inquiries concerning disability, and to collect and disseminate relevant and useful information. CLEAR was part of the UNOV/CSDHA mandate to act as focal point for disability-related information, and would be a legacy of the Decade.

41. Participants welcomed the progress made by UNOV/CSDHA on the CLEAR project. Concern was expressed about the possible overlapping of efforts, since many agencies of the United Nations system had databases in their respective fields. It was agreed that the clearing-house should serve to facilitate contacts between the United Nations agencies and other bodies. The importance of access by developing countries to all relevant databases was emphasized. Further development of the project would depend upon continued funding support.

5. Standard rules on the equalization of opportunities for disabled persons

42. The attention of the meeting was drawn to the final report of the Ad Hoc Open-Ended Working Group to Elaborate Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Disabled Persons (E/CN.5/1993/5), which had recommended the draft text of the standard rules for finalization by the Commission for Social Development at its thirty-third session, in February 1993. Rule number 22, "International cooperation", which specifically emphasized the role of the United Nations and its specialized agencies, was given particular mention. The importance of the cooperation of agencies in monitoring the implementation of the standard rules at the national level was stressed, and it was noted that a number of United Nations entities and specialized agencies had actively participated in their elaboration.

43. There was general agreement by the participants that the elaboration of the standard rules could be regarded as a success, especially in view of the innovative and specific nature of the new document. The importance of inter-agency cooperation in the implementation of the standard rules was pointed out. It was agreed that this question should be considered in detail by one of the forthcoming inter-agency meetings, following the adoption of the standard rules by the General Assembly.

6. Technical cooperation in the field of disability

44. The participants were informed about a proposal of the UNDP Interregional Programme for Disabled People on the priorities of programmes concerning disabled persons in developing countries. The main points of the proposal centred around better delivery of rehabilitation services and improved access to development programmes; increasing resources for and improving coordination of development programmes for disabled people; increasing awareness of the abilities of disabled people and promoting their participation in development plans and programmes at the local and national level; monitoring of human rights, including equitable access to opportunities; and improving collection and dissemination of information.

45. A representative of the Swedish International Development Authority (SIDA) informed the participants that, of the SIDA total budget for assistance to developing countries, approximately 1 per cent had been allocated to

disability-related projects. Bilateral support to countries had increased and had aimed primarily at community-based rehabilitation and the education of children with special needs. Since the beginning of the Decade, SIDA had contributed to the development of community-based rehabilitation programmes by WHO, the promotion of special education by UNESCO, country programmes in collaboration with UNDP and the coordinating and programming activities of UNOV/CSDHA. Other programmes supported by SIDA included support to organizations of disabled persons and vocational rehabilitation in collaboration with ILO. Finally, SIDA had taken part in the creation of the clearing-house at UNOV/CSDHA and the disability information service already in operation at the International Child Health Unit (ICH) of Uppsala University, Sweden and the Appropriate Health Resources and Technologies Action Group, London (AHRTAG).

46. The participants emphasized the advantage of a multisectoral approach by the agencies in the field of technical cooperation on disability. The importance of the coordinating roles of the United Nations Development Programme at the national level and of UNRWA for technical cooperation activities in the occupied territories was stressed. It was stressed that UNDP resident representatives should promote the integration of disability issues in country programmes. While the community-based rehabilitation (CBR) approach was considered ideal for improving the situation of disabled persons in developing countries, it was agreed that the CBR-model would have to be adapted from country to country, according to particular needs and social situation.

47. It was emphasized that technical cooperation activities in the disability field suffered from a continuous lack of financial resources. In that context, special reference was made to General Assembly resolution A/C.3/47/L.15, paragraph 8. Participants focused on ways to use existing resources and raise new funds for technical cooperation programmes. The important role of the media in creating public pressure that could raise the necessary funds for technical cooperation activities was stressed, as well as the considerable resources of the voluntary sector, particularly organizations of disabled persons in both developed and developing countries. This view was supported by several participants, who noted that disabled persons should not be regarded as mere subjects of technical cooperation programmes, but as active partners. Some participants requested that reports on planned technical cooperation activities be made available in advance to organizations of and for disabled persons to allow for their cooperation.

7. Employment of disabled persons within the United Nations system

48. The two main achievements of the Decade within the United Nations system had been the adoption of the 1983 Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC) policy statement on employment of the disabled (ACC/1983/9), and the promulgation in 1989 of a plan to improve employment opportunities for disabled persons within the Secretariat.

49. Several participants were concerned that even if disabled persons were recruited into the United Nations system their potential would not be fully realized. Concern was also expressed about the availabilty of assistive devices for successful candidates.

50. The participants agreed that the United Nations Secretariat should disseminate on a regular basis a list of countries where national examinations for professional recruitment would be held. This would also enable non-governmental organizations to ensure the participation of disabled persons in those examinations. National selection authorities should actively encourage participation of candidates with disabilities in those examinations. The United Nations system, in the World Programme of Action concerning Disabled Persons, was urged to adopt an affirmative action plan that included administrative policies and practices to encourage the employment of disabled persons in the entire United Nations system. It was strongly recommended that guidelines for an affirmative action plan be developed and that the ACC policy statement on the employment of disabled persons of 1983 be updated.

51. The systematic collection of data on disabled persons currently employed throughout the United Nations system had proven problematic. The meeting suggested that additional consultations and the development of an appropriate data-collection methodology were necessary to accomplish this task.

C. The long-term strategy to the year 2000 and beyond: a society for all

52. The report of the Expert Group Meeting on a Long-Term Strategy to Further the Implementation of the World Programme of Action concerning Disabled Persons to the Year 2000 and Beyond, held at Vancouver from 25 to 29 April 1992 (E/CN.5/1993/4), was introduced by the Chairperson of that Meeting. The objective of the strategy was to encourage Member States, United Nations bodies and organizations and governmental and non-governmental organizations to develop strategic action plans and to establish permanent planning and monitoring mechanisms for implementing the World Programme of Action.

53. The participants noted that the strategy document needed further strengthening and that clearer priorities within specific time-frames had to be set. More attention had to be given to the problems of developing countries. As a special concern, the physical and mental disabling effects of armed conflicts on children and women needed to be addressed.

54. The meeting concluded that there was a need to continue the work on the strategy to further the implementation of the World Programme of Action and to build a clear link between the strategy and the forthcoming document on the standard rules on the equalization of opportunities for disabled persons. The importance of a unified, well-coordinated monitoring mechanism for all three instruments was stressed. The participating agencies were requested to send

to UNOV/CSDHA their comments on the strategy, prior to its submission to the Commission for Social Development at its forthcoming session.

D. United Nations Task Force on Disabled Children and Women

55. On behalf of the focal point, the representative of UNICEF reported on the work of the First Meeting of the United Nations Task Force on Disabled Children and Women, held in Nairobi on 8 September 1992 in conjunction with the 17th World Congress of Rehabilitation International. As agreed, the Working Group of the Task Force had held further consultations during the inter-agency meeting to consider its future programme of work.

E. Other business

56. The Meeting welcomed the launching of the Asian and Pacific Decade of Disabled Persons, 1993-2002 and took note with appreciation of the Agenda for Action for that Decade.

57. The participants agreed that the next inter-agency meeting on disability issues at the global level should be tentatively scheduled to take place at Vienna in January 1994. They also agreed on the items to be included in the agenda for that meeting (see sect. I, recommendation 4 above).

Notes

1/ DPI/1264.

2/ DPI/1201 (United Nations publication, Sales No. 92.I.13).

3/ ILO(02)/H85 (Geneva, ILO, 1992).

Annex I

PROPOSED TERMS OF REFERENCE OF INTER-AGENCY MEETINGS ON DISABILITY AFTER THE UNITED NATIONS DECADE OF DISABLED PERSONS

A. Introduction

1. The Joint Statement of the participating organizations and agencies which was adopted by the Ninth Inter-Agency Meeting on the Decade reflected its major achievements, which included:

(a) Improved knowledge of the work and specific contributions of each participating organization;

(b) Better coordination and close collaboration, especially in the preparation of technical documents, including guidelines and manuals on disability-related issues;

(c) Valuable contributions by international non-governmental organizations with consultative status with the Economic and Social Council which participated in the inter-agency meetings.

2. The challenge before the inter-agency meetings in the years to come will be the translation of agreed global principles and concepts into national policies and plans.

3. At this point in time, on the basis of the experience gained during the Decade and taking into account the process of restructuring and streamlining of the Secretariat and its organs and bodies, as well as that of the specialized agencies,

also taking into account the new direction given to the United Nations programme on disability, which will be more action-oriented and more operational, and in view of the programme orientation of the specialized agencies to reinforce action at the country level,

the Tenth Inter-Agency Meeting on the United Nations Decade of Disabled Persons welcomes the decision of the General Assembly to continue the inter-agency meetings established in the context of the Decade and to focus such meetings on the implementation of the World Programme of Action (see A/C.3/47/L.15, para. 8 (g)).

B. Guidelines and purpose

4. The Meeting reiterates that the inter-agency meetings are a valuable forum for the exchange of information and experiences. The Meeting recommends the following draft terms of reference for the work of future inter-agency meetings on disability, for approval by the ACC:

(a) The inter-agency meetings will continue to serve as a forum for the exchange of ideas and cooperation at the international level within the United Nations system with the aim of achieving greater coherence and effectiveness of its disability-related policies and programmes;

(b) The focus of the work of the inter-agency meetings will be to monitor the implementation of the World Programme of Action concerning Disabled Persons, the standard rules on the equalization of opportunities for disabled persons and the long-term strategy to the year 2000 and beyond;

(c) The work of the inter-agency meetings will make inputs into the major events organized by the United Nations system.

C. Format

5. There will be a two-pronged approach to future inter-agency meetings:

(a) An inter-agency meeting at the global level to be held every two years;

(b) Regional inter-agency meetings with a specific focus to be organized by regional commissions every other year, their outcome to be brought before the biennial global inter-agency meeting.

D. NGO participation

6. The Non-Governmental Organization Consultative Forum should be strengthened and made a permanent mechanism, meeting annually prior to each inter-agency meeting. The second day of the Non-Governmental Organization Consultative Forum will be devoted to specific projects and activities of common interest to international non-governmental organizations and United Nations agencies.

7. In the spirit of cooperation which has developed throughout the United Nations Decade for Disabled Persons, a selected representation of international non-governmental organizations will participate in the first day of each inter-agency meeting. The Chairman of the Non-Governmental Organization Consultative Forum will inform the inter-agency meeting of its outcome and recommendations. A series of joint recommendations for action will be considered.

8. The following seven international non-governmental organizations, in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council, will be represented by one duly authorized person:

(a) International Council on Disability (representing also other non-governmental organizations which are members of the Non-Governmental Organization Consultative Forum);

(b) Disabled Peoples' International;

(c) International League of Societies for the Mentally Handicapped;

(d) Rehabilitation International;

(e) World Blind Union;

(f) World Federation of the Deaf;

(g) World Veterans Federation.

E. Duration

9. Each inter-agency meeting will be of a two-day duration.

F. Venue

10. The biennial inter-agency meetings at the global level will be hosted by the UNOV/CSDHA focal point on disability issues or held at the specific invitation of one of the United Nations organizations or agencies.

11. Responsibility for the overall coordination of global inter-agency meetings will rest with UNOV/CSDHA.

Annex II

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

United Nations entities and programmes

United Nations Office at Vienna

Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for the Promotion of the United Nations Decade of Disabled Persons	Hans Hoegh John Strome
Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs	Ferdinand Mayerhofer-Grunbuhel
Social Development Division	Henryk J. Sokalski (Chairman)
Developmental Social Welfare and Social Integration Branch	
Disabled Persons Unit	Mamadou Barry Lars Blomgren Ronald Wiman Inez Wyngaarde Smart Eze (Secretary) Isobel Calvert Per Anderson Osamu Nagase Annette Kuenzel Michael Kudlak
Division for the Advancement of Women	Magaly Roman-Martinez
Office of Human Resource Management/United Nations Office at Vienna Personnel Service	Jay Wormus
Department of Public Information	Joseph W. O. Findlay
Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia	Kay Abe-Nagate
United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees	Marie Lobo
United Nations Children's Fund	Gulbadan Habibi (Rapporteur)

United Nations Development Programme and International Initiative against Avoidable Disablement	Cecile Davis
United Nations Development Programme Interregional Project on Disability	Einar Helander
United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East	Shariq Ben Raza
<u>Specialized agencies of the United Nations system</u>	
International Labour Organisation	L. Reguera Garcia
Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations	L. W. Jacobsen
United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization	Lena Saleh
World Health Organization	Enrico Pupulin
<u>Non-governmental organizations</u>	
Disabled Peoples' International	Ron Chandran-Dudley Henry Enns Maria Christina Sara-Serrano
International Council on Disability	Sheikh Abdullah Al-Ghanim Rodolfo Cattani Philipp Hartig Liisa Kauppinnen Duncan A. Watson Peter Mittler Serge Wourgaft
Swedish International Development Authority <u>a</u>/	Ingrid Cornell Gabor Tiroler

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<u>a</u>/ Invited to participate as a resource organization in technical matters.